

From: John Laur
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/24/02 1:19pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

I am not in support of the proposed settlement for the reasons listed in the following paragraphs. I have read plenty of other arguments that the settlement is poor; however, I don't feel that I understand enough about those reasons to comment. I'm not a lawyer, so I apologize for the lack of extensive references.

* It does not take into account systems which can or could be made compatible with the Microsoft Windows operating environment.

* It fails to address the issue of Microsoft strong-arming OEM's to limit their freedoms to install what they want on machines they sell.

* It fails to provide a means by which the agreement would be enforced if enacted.

This is getting ridiculous. Microsoft continues to blow smoke and buy years of time. Computer hardware manufacturers targeting the consumer market generally produce equipment that meets certain standard and documented criteria so that software (ie any software such as an operating system) can be run on the machine. Due to the complex nature of modern personal computers, application software no longer runs directly on the hardware. Operating systems exist to provide an abstraction layer and further refinement to a standard interface to allow application software to be developed more efficiently. The problem with what Microsoft does is that it continues to make its own interfaces proprietary or undocumented, so that it becomes extremely difficult to develop applications which work efficiently on multiple platforms or use applications which use this interface on other platforms which cannot support it.

In the end, this ends up hurting the consumer tremendously. The constant tweaks and changes Microsoft has to make to its "Operating System" to sustain this level of secrecy only ends up ending in an overly complex system to support the many versions of older interfaces that exist - obsoleted by the simple fact that they are old enough for others to have figured them out!

Thank you for soliciting comments.

Sincerely,
John Laur